

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
TO H.R. 3749
OFFERED BY MR. CISNEROS

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

1 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

2 This Act may be cited as the “Legal Services for
3 Homeless Veterans Act”.

4 SEC. 2. LEGAL SERVICES FOR HOMELESS VETERANS AND
5 VETERANS AT RISK FOR HOMELESSNESS.

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 20 of title 38, United
7 States Code, is amended by inserting after section 2022
8 the following new section:

9 “§ 2022A. Legal services for homeless veterans and
10 veterans at risk for homelessness

11 “(a) GRANTS.—Subject to the availability of appro-
12 priations provided for such purpose, the Secretary of Vet-
13 erans Affairs shall make grants to eligible entities that
14 provide legal services to homeless veterans and veterans
15 at risk for homelessness.

16 “(b) CRITERIA.—(1) The Secretary shall—

1 “(A) establish criteria and requirements for
2 grants under this section, including criteria for enti-
3 ties eligible to receive such grants; and

4 “(B) publish such criteria and requirements in
5 the Federal Register.

6 “(2) In establishing criteria and requirements under
7 paragraph (1), the Secretary shall—

8 “(A) take into consideration any criteria and
9 requirements needed with respect to carrying out
10 this section in rural communities, Tribal lands, and
11 the territories and possessions of the United States;
12 and

13 “(B) consult with organizations that have expe-
14 rience in providing services to homeless veterans, in-
15 cluding veterans service organizations, the Equal
16 Justice Works AmeriCorps Veterans Legal Corps,
17 and other organizations the Secretary determines
18 appropriate.

19 “(c) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—The Secretary may make
20 a grant under this section to an entity applying for such
21 a grant only if the applicant for the grant—

22 “(1) is a public or nonprofit private entity with
23 the capacity (as determined by the Secretary) to ef-
24 fectively administer a grant under this section;

1 “(2) demonstrates that adequate financial sup-
2 port will be available to carry out the services for
3 which the grant is sought consistent with the appli-
4 cation;

5 “(3) agrees to meet the applicable criteria and
6 requirements established under subsection (b)(1);
7 and

8 “(4) has, as determined by the Secretary, dem-
9 onstrated the capacity to meet such criteria and re-
10 quirements.

11 “(d) USE OF FUNDS.—Grants under this section
12 shall be used to provide homeless veterans and veterans
13 at risk for homelessness the following legal services:

14 “(1) Legal services related to housing, including
15 eviction defense, representation in landlord-tenant
16 cases, and representation in foreclosure cases.

17 “(2) Legal services related to family law, in-
18 cluding assistance in court proceedings for child sup-
19 port, divorce, estate planning, and family reconcili-
20 ation.

21 “(3) Legal services related to income support,
22 including assistance in obtaining public benefits.

23 “(4) Legal services related to criminal defense,
24 including defense in matters symptomatic of home-
25 lessness, such as outstanding warrants, fines, and

1 driver's license revocation, to reduce recidivism and
2 facilitate the overcoming of reentry obstacles in em-
3 ployment or housing.

4 “(5) Legal services related to requests to up-
5 grade the characterization of a discharge or dis-
6 missal of a former member of the Armed Forces
7 under section 1553 of title 10.

8 “(6) Such other legal services as the Secretary
9 determines appropriate.

10 “(e) FUNDS FOR WOMEN VETERANS.—For any fiscal
11 year, not less than ten percent of the amount authorized
12 to be appropriated for grants under this section shall be
13 used to provide legal services described in subsection (d)
14 to women veterans.

15 “(f) REPORTS.—On a biennial basis, the Secretary
16 shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of
17 the House of Representatives and the Senate a report on
18 grants under this section. To the extent feasible, each such
19 report shall include the following with respect to the year
20 covered by the report:

21 “(1) The number of homeless veterans and vet-
22 erans at risk for homelessness assisted.

23 “(2) A description of the legal services pro-
24 vided.

1 “(3) A description of the legal matters ad-
2 dressed.

3 “(4) An analysis by the Secretary with respect
4 to the operational effectiveness and cost-effectiveness
5 of the services provided.”.

6 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
7 at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting
8 after the item relating to section 2022 the following new
9 item:

“2022A. Legal services for homeless veterans and veterans at risk for homeless-
ness.”.

10 (c) CRITERIA.—Not later than 180 days after the
11 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Vet-
12 erans Affairs shall establish the criteria and requirements
13 in the Federal Register pursuant to subsection (b)(1) of
14 section 2022A of title 38, United States Code, as added
15 by subsection (a).

16 **SEC. 3. ADDITIONAL AMOUNT FOR SUPPORTIVE SERVICES**
17 **FOR VETERAN FAMILIES GRANT PROGRAM**
18 **TO SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS THAT HAVE A**
19 **FOCUS ON PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO**
20 **WOMEN VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES.**

21 Section 2044(e) of title 38, United States Code, is
22 amended by adding at the end the following new para-
23 graph:

1 “(4) Not less than \$20,000,000 shall be avail-
2 able under paragraph (1) for any fiscal year for the
3 provision of financial assistance under subsection (a)
4 to organizations that have a focus on providing as-
5 sistance to women veterans and their families.”.

6 **SEC. 4. GAP ANALYSIS OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-**
7 **FAIRS PROGRAMS THAT PROVIDE ASSIST-**
8 **ANCE TO WOMEN VETERANS WHO ARE HOME-**
9 **LESS.**

10 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs
11 shall complete an analysis of programs of the Department
12 of Veterans Affairs that provide assistance to women vet-
13 erans who are homeless or precariously housed to identify
14 the areas in which such programs are failing to meet the
15 needs of such women.

16 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 270 days after the date
17 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit
18 to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and
19 the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Rep-
20 resentatives a report on the analysis completed under sub-
21 section (a).

Amend the title so as to read: “A bill to amend title
38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Vet-
erans Affairs to make grants to entities that provide legal

services for homeless veterans and veterans at risk for homelessness, and for other purposes.”.

